

A Winning Combination - Colts and State team up with Indians to ask fans to bring books and be a big hit with kids

INDIANAPOLIS (May 29, 2008) – The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) and the Indianapolis Colts are again asking for your help this year to make an even greater impact on the foster youth in Indiana through the Books for Youth program. Last year the two teamed up to collect over 70,000 books for the more than 2,000 children in the foster care system in the greater Indianapolis area.

This Saturday, May 31, the Colts and DCS will partner with the Indianapolis Indians at Victory Field to celebrate that achievement and begin the effort to collect 250,000 books to reach foster youth statewide. The baseball game begins at 7 p.m., but the gates will open at 5:30 p.m. for fans attending the game to drop off their new and gently used books at the Colts tent located in center field. Colts Cheerleaders will be on hand to sign autographs, take pictures with fans and distribute a limited edition Colts READ poster to fans who donate a book, while supplies last.

Colts players will also be hosting a group of foster youth at the game. Beginning at 6:00 p.m., the players will distribute backpacks filled with 25 books each to the foster youth. The youngsters will then have the opportunity to enjoy the game with their families. The players are also scheduled to throw out the first pitch at the game.

Tickets are just \$13 for box seats and \$9 for reserved, and may be purchased by visiting the Victory Field Box Office at 501 West Maryland Street, online at www.indyindians.com, or by calling Ticketmaster at (317) 239-5151.

“Everyone, especially children, need and deserve a sense that they belong somewhere and to have something that is theirs. With the Books for Youth effort, we can let children know that they are important, give them something that is theirs, and perhaps encourage the gift of reading and education during this time of crisis in their life,” stated James Payne, DCS Director.

About the Books for Youth Program

Created through a partnership between DCS and the Colts, the Books for Youth program seeks to provide foster youth in Indiana with a personal library of 25 books each. On any given day in Marion County alone, more than 1,200 children are in the foster care system and too often they leave their belongings behind when they move. The Colts and DCS want to change that by helping place age-appropriate books in each child’s hands and are asking for community support to make a smart handoff to Indiana’s youth.

To find out more on how to hold a donation drive or become a community partner, please visit www.IN.gov/dcs/booksforyouth or call 317.234.KIDS.

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